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was Mr. Randolph, and on the other, Mr. Jackson, of Virginia. Mr. Randolph had spoken, when Mr. Jackson rose in reply. He had not proceeded far, when, having occasion to refer to some part of Mr. Randolph's speech, he addressed him as—'My friend from Virginia.' He had scarcely given utterance to the word 'friend,' when Mr. Randolph sprang to his feet, and throwing his lustrous eyes first on Mr. Jackson, and then on the speaker, keeping his arm extended, meantime, and his long, bony finger pointing at Mr. Jackson, said, in that peculiar voice of his,—

"*Mr. Speaker!* — *I am not that gentleman's* FRIEND, sir. I have never been his friend, sir; nor do I ever mean to *be* his friend, sir! — when he took his seat.

"Mr. Jackson, meantime, keeping his position on the floor, looking first upon Mr. Randolph, and then at the speaker, replied, —

"*Mr. Speaker*, I am at a loss to know by what title to address the honorable *member* from Virginia'; — then pausing awhile, with his finger beside his nose, he said, — '*I have it, sir, — I have it, — it shall be*' — looking Mr. Randolph full in the face — 'THE RIGHT HONORABLE DESCENDANT OF HER MAJESTY, QUEEN POCAHONTAS!'

"The entire countenance of Mr. Randolph changed instantly; and, from a look of mingled aversion and contempt, to a smile the most complaisant and gracious. The storm-cloud was dissipated, and the rainbow seemed to reflect all its hues upon his countenance, in one glow of heart-felt reconciliation, — when he bowed most courteously, giving evidence that of all the honors he had ever coveted, that of having descended from that heaven-inspired woman was the one he most highly prized. And who would not be proud of such a descent?" — Vol. II., pp. 64, 65.

ART. X. — *The Koran, commonly called the Alcoran, of Mohammed; translated into English, with Explanatory Notes, and a Preliminary Discourse.* By GEORGE SALE. London. 1838. 8vo.

SISMONDI and Carlyle have done something, of late years, to make us believe that the old orthodox notion of Mahomet's, or Mohammed's, power and success is not as well founded as might be. They have tried to convince the world that naked, selfish, mean imposition never could have done what

the spirit of the founder of Islam did God, according to their doctrine, has not endowed shallow craft and unlimited lying with such mighty control over human souls as that which the great Arabian possessed. But the mass of those who write on the prophet still write in the tone of the Crusaders ; they buckle on their armor to do battle with the false leader of the infidel host, in place of opening their eyes and purging their minds, to see and understand aright one of the great phenomena of history, that is to say, one of the great facts in God's government of the world. And is it not truly a great fact, that a wild, illiterate, unregenerate Arab was able to breathe a spirit of advancement, of daring, of enterprise, of civilization even, into those desert children, which has lasted for so many centuries, and swept clean so many countries ? Count over your great men, your Alexanders, Solons, Platos, Homers,—how many of them have influenced human destinies, moulded human laws, ruled in palaces, judged in courts, led in battles, taken the child in the cradle and guided it even to the tomb, as this rude Ishmaelite has done ? Let us not, even if we can, shut our eyes to the fact, that in the success of Mohammed God has placed before us a riddle worthy our reading ; and let us not forget, that, when he places before us a lesson to be learned, we are little better than blasphemers, if we fail at least to study it. It is in the hope that we may do something for some minds toward reading this riddle, that we write the few following pages.

And, in the first place, it should be clearly understood that we know very little with certainty respecting the prophet. Neither Saracens nor Christians are to be believed. He that reads must read *as Niebuhr* did. He must question every statement, weigh every intimation, compare friend and enemy on every point of praise and dispraise. The Koran alone may be trusted, and to the study of that more than all else the inquirer should turn, and strive to find the needle which shall guide him in that vast stack of mingled weeds, flowers, and food.

In the next place, the different periods of Mohammed's life must be distinguished, and each one made to throw light upon the others. And this must be done with a constant prayer that God will enable us to set aside prejudice, and judge of this man as we should judge of another. With these

two thoughts to aid as, let us enter upon the inquiry, What was Mohammed, and how came he to play so great a part in the world's history? His life consisted of three periods; the first extending from his birth to the commencement of his mission, at about the age of forty; the second including his years of trial and suffering, and closing with his flight to Medina, in the fifty-third year of his age; the third, his period of triumph, ending with his death, ten years after his flight. What was this man in these three periods?

In a narrow valley, hemmed in by barren mountains, a valley without pastures, or grain-fields, or even springs of sweet water, stood the holy city of Mecca. Many tribes of the keen, nervous Arab race lived there, but none of them was so noble as the Koreish, and of that tribe no house was so powerful as the house of Hashem, who kept the key of the Caaba, the holy temple, where the sevenfold stone bound with silver, which the archangel Gabriel brought from heaven when God made the world, stood for the reverential kiss of the sons of Ishmael. Gabriel brought it milk-white from above, but the sins of man had in early ages changed its color to black. Of the house of Hashem, in the year of our Lord 569, there were living Abdol Motaleb, his thirteen sons, and six daughters. Among these sons was Abdallah, the light of the East, whose smile no maiden could withstand. Flashing eyes followed his stately person, wherever he moved; warm Arab hearts beat quicker, whenever his noble countenance was seen; and when the rumor spread through the Holy City, and sped out on swift couriers even to the daughters of the desert, that Amina was the chosen bride of the beautiful grandson of Hashem, many a bosom felt that void which nothing can fill. Amina, like her husband, was of the tribe of the Koreish, and of a noble house of that tribe. We may be sure it was a princely wedding. Grand old men with flowing beards, and stately women, and free-moving youths in their light Eastern costume, and wondering children with their open eyes, we may feel certain graced the ceremony; the youngest of them died twelve hundred years ago, and yet is that wedding memorable, for from the union sprang Mohammed.

The little boy, who inherited his father's beauty, and whose mind and temper were from the cradle noticeable, was but just beginning to climb that father's knee, and to

listen and answer as they sat upon the house-top in the twilight, when the angel of death took Abdallah from the earth ; the son of Hashem saw the fairest of his nineteen children fall the first. Can we bring before us the widowed Amina, with her little prophet by her side ? Can we imagine how he, with his quick, wild soul and keen sense of justice, was educated into a horror and hatred of the customs of his country by the injustice of his uncles, who, according to usage, seized his father's wealth, and left him and his mother stripped ? Will not the two years, sad and lonely years, which he passed with the mourning and suffering bride of Abdallah, show us something of the creation of the Arabian Reformer ? Two lonely years, and then the weary heart of Amina herself stood still. Silence reigned in the house ; silently friends moved round the bed of death ; and he stood there, a little child of four years old, with the heart and the imagination of a child, — looked on the pallid face, the speechless lips, and knew that it was the cruel treatment allowed by the pagan faith he lived under, which had robbed the eye Abdallah had loved of its beauty, and brought the young bride to her grave. He knew it all, but did not know he knew it ; it was in his imagination and soul, not in his understanding. Many words had that weeping mother spoken to him, which had sunk into his heart to lie for years, and prepare the way for Islam.

Amina was laid in her tomb, and Mohammed looked up into the sorrowing face of his grandfather, who took the orphan-boy kindly by the hand and led him home. He was a kind old man, Abdol Motaleb, and he loved and cared tenderly for Abdallah's child. For two more years Mohammed grew in strength, beauty, and intelligence under the patriarch's eye ; then the son of Hashem called the stripling to him, and having sent for Abdallah's eldest brother, Abu Taleb, he gave the orphan to his uncle, saying, — " I am dying. Take this child, whose father and mother have been called away from this world, and rear him as if he were your own." The uncle promised him protection, and in a little while the boy followed to the grave his third, his last parent. So early was his spirit purified and made strong by sorrow.

Let us pass by twenty years, and look at Abdallah's son a grown man, faintly visible as he is in the pages of biogra-

phy. He is a merchant or factor, not trading on his own account, but heretofore agent for his uncle, and lately advanced into the service of a rich lady of Mecca, Cadijah, already twice a widow. He had travelled ; he had been in Syria ; had seen Christians and Jews ; had listened to the history and the poetry of the old Hebrews. Calm, acute, quick, imaginative, and devout by nature, and devout also through suffering, Mohammed saw and heard realities ; and in silence, half consciously, weighed the faith and the practice of his own pagan Arabia against the simple deism and the sublime morality of Moses. Among his companions, kind, considerate, and remarkable for his purity ; in business exact and thorough ; with a person of uncommon beauty, an address of remarkable grace, a fine intellect, and a spotless character, — none of the descendants of Hashem promised better than the son of Abdallah. And now he is leaving again, in the service of Cadijah, to spend some years in Syria. Will he not carry still farther his inquiries into Judaism and Christianity ? Will he not think yet more earnestly of a change among his own wild brethren, that shall do away with those savage customs which made his childhood one of dependence, and brought Amina to the grave ? Can we not from all the fables about the Nestorian monk Sergius take simply this kernel, that Mohammed, in his various journeys to Syria, became well acquainted with the faith of Moses and with that of Jesus, and leave all the husks of time, place, and circumstance to those who please to quarrel about them ? Are we not authorized to feel sure, that, when the factor of the rich Meccan widow, at the age of twenty-eight, became her husband, and rose through her wealth to the place which he might claim as his own by birth, he was already earnestly, silently meditating that great reform in the faith and practice of his countrymen which twelve years later he commenced ?

Slowly do the great births of time, material or spiritual, take place. Napoleon may rise in an instant to his zenith of influence, but so he falls, too ; Mohammed through twenty years quietly meditates his mission, and leaves an impress on the world for twenty centuries ; Christianity yet more slowly grows towards power ; the Arab lived to triumph, Jesus died upon the tree ; and now the crescent is passing away before the cross. No meteor hangs long in the firma-

ment. Through twenty years Mohammed listened, thought, and prayed, — through eight years of active life, through twelve of quiet retirement. Imagine the effect of retirement, of earnest, solitary meditation, on a mind of vast, uneducated powers ; a soul of mighty passion, chastened and curbed by a will of iron. He saw the evils of Arabian society, of Arabian law, of Arabian religion, — that is, of paganism ; he saw, too, that, wherever great progress had been made, it had proceeded from revelation ; Moses and Jesus were prophets of the one God. Was God dead ? Had he ceased to take an interest in mankind ? Did he care less for the offspring of Hagar than for those of Sarah ? Was no other prophet to arise, no further revelation to be made ? Nay, did not even Judaism and Christianity require another revelation to purify them ? Had not Jesus promised another to complete his work, the Comforter ?

Twenty years of such questioning, and deep meditation thereon, might produce an impostor or an enthusiast, a liar or a self-deceiver. Which was Mohammed ? Before seeking an answer in his after life, look at him as he is, and which is the most probable character for him to live in ? He is noble, his ambition is thereby gratified ; he is rich, he can hope no more from wealth ; he is looked on as a man of leading mind, love of power and fame on that score is satisfied ; his character is so pure, so faultless, that men point him out as a model to their sons. Will he, profoundly false, plan to deceive his countrymen into a system better than their own, and gain nothing himself ? That surely would not be human nature. And what could he gain for himself ? What did Jesus gain ? What did Moses gain, or any true servant of God ? Would these fierce idolaters — these worshippers of the sun, and moon, and stars, these kissers of the Black Stone — make him their king and prophet because he *pretended* to have a mission from God ? The Israelites, with their old traditions, so much stronger and fresher than those of the Ishmaelites, could scarce yield to Moses with all his miracles ; would he, without any miracle, succeed, where the rod of the Hebrew lawgiver and the thunders of Sinai were so weak ? He was a shrewd man, this Mohammed ; in worldly matters he had sped well ; he was an astute, cautious, judicious merchant of forty. In England or the United States, he would, in our day, have been presi-

dent of a bank, chief director in a railroad or canal company. Now, to him coolly calculating, what sort of a speculation was this of prophecy? On the one hand, certain rank, certain wealth, certain respect and estimation; on the other, every thing uncertain, but persecution probable, and little to be hoped at last save the production of a faith in one God, for whom — on this imposture theory — he cared not a straw. Would any judicious Yankee have gone into this business of humbug with such odds? It was not a case of quack medicines, or perpetual-motion machines. Mohammed was trying his patent invention against the intensest prejudices of one of the intensest races this earth has been occupied by. Imagine a Dutch merchant of old times, say 1650, going to preach the gospel of peace and forgiveness among the Mohawks *on speculation*; or a wise Boston dealer of our day starting, — not for Texas or Oregon, — but for the Blackfeet or Crows on a like mission; — imagine this, and then you have a conception of Mohammed playing the part of impostor. Out on the idea! Paley's argument for the honesty of the Apostles is worth nothing, if Mohammed was an impostor, — leaving out of sight, what we have presently to present, his after life. O, no! whether rogue or not afterwards, let us so far respect our own hearts and heads, — human nature, fallen as it is, — as to believe that this unlettered, imaginative, world-oppressed, heaven-seeking Arab was no mere cheat, but one to whose imagination heaven was opened, and to whom Gabriel came, *subjectively at least*, in truth. Twenty years of earnest thought on the questions, “Will God never send another prophet? never heal our woes?” twenty years of earnest longing that he would, of solitary, heartfelt prayer that he might, were enough to draw Gabriel to that cave of Hara, in Mohammed's thought, if not in reality. In how many hours had Amina met her child in that quiet cave! How often had the misty form of Abdallah, even, floated near him! Was it strange, that, on the night of Al Kadr (the divine decree), the Koran drew near to the earth, — God's expressed will near to man, — and that the archangel, dark with excessive bright, told the dreamer of his mission?

The light of morning was breaking over Mecca on the 24th of the month of Ramadan, and Cadijah yet waited the coming of her husband. Many a night he had been absent

in his solitude, and she had slept in peace ; but for some days his mind had been so absent, so excited, so elevated, that she could not rest. Morning dawned ; her husband came ; never had she seen such a fire in his eye, such light in every trait of his noble countenance. Was it insanity or inspiration ? To her his words, burning with the calm fervor of the sun, proved it the latter, and the new prophet had one disciple.

Now begins the second period of the prophet's life, extending through about thirteen years. Supposing him honest at the commencement of it, did he continue so ? And what light does his conduct during this part of his career throw upon the previous portion of his history ? Does it add to or take from the proofs of his honesty at the beginning of his mission ?

His wife was his first convert ; his servant his next ; Ali, the son of Abu Taleb his protector, and the leading man of Mecca, was his third ; Abubekir, a rich and influential citizen of the Holy City, his fourth. In four years he had gained but nine followers. Then he called together all of the house of Hashem to hear his message, for hitherto he had labored in secret, — labored rather to perfect his own conceptions, probably, than to convey them to others. His relatives, or forty of them, came at his call, curious to hear what their quiet, easy, comfortable cousin Mohammed had to say. Cousin Mohammed was a changed man since they last saw him ; then he was a thriving merchant and bridegroom, who seemed likely to enjoy his wealth, bring up his children respectably, and command the regard of his fellow-citizens for his intelligence and virtue, but who would never set the world on fire. Now, at this annunciation feast, his eye, manner, voice, and words had a vehemence, fervor, and extravagance in them, heretofore unknown in him. Some wondered, some laughed, some scoffed ; to a few it was inspiration, to most sheer madness, to one or two (the rogues of the family) deep hypocrisy and imposture. The family of Hashem, the kin of Abdallah, rejected him. Then he turned from his own house to the Holy City, and in public, to all men, at the doors of the Caaba, to the idolatrous pilgrims flocking thither, proclaimed the truth given through Abraham, through Moses, through Jesus, and now again through him : — “ God is one God ; the eternal God ; he begetteth not, neither is he begotten ; and there is not any one like unto

him.”* “Those whose balance shall be weighty with good works shall go into paradise ; but they whose balance shall be light of good works shall go into hell.”† The people listened in wonder to the eloquence of their townsman ; the pilgrims heard, half angry, half alarmed, his denunciations of their idol-worship. The tribe of the Koreish — from among whom the keepers of the temple were taken, and who now saw with alarm and horror one rising to overthrow that temple, from the very family to which its care had been confided — found a solace for their troubles in the suggestion, that, should the family of Hashem uphold Mohammed, the time was come to turn that house from its primacy and exalt some other to its place. Abu Taleb, calm and firm, who had promised his father to protect Abdallah’s child, would not desert him in his hour of need. He knew his virtues, his integrity, his purity, his intelligence, — and while he thought him an enthusiast, perhaps a madman, he still held over him his powerful arm, and the bold prophet was unhurt. Months passed, and years passed ; day after day Mohammed took his station in the open street, and proclaimed the unity of God, the terrors of hell that lay before all idolaters and evil-doers, and the certainty of his own mission. A man, as we have said, of noble appearance, of persuasive manners, of natural eloquence and grace, and of excited imagination, — all could not hear him unmoved ; but the greater part cried out upon him, that he had a devil, that he was a sorcerer, that he was a man distracted, a liar and a knave. Now and then some man came to him privately, and owned himself a convert ; now and then some woman fell at his knees and hailed him as the prophet of the Most High ; but in the seventh year of his mission, all his adherents in Mecca could not much have exceeded a hundred. ‡

Months passed, and years passed, and still, day by day, amid the gathering storm, when his followers had to fly to other lands, when even his daughter had to seek a foreign home, and after the other families of the Koreish had bound themselves by a solemn league against the family of Hashem, — even then, Mohammed, in the streets of Mecca, poured

* Koran, ch. 112.

† Koran, ch. 101.

‡ One hundred and one fled to Ethiopia in that year, to escape persecution ; and these could not have been the weakest only, as Mohammed’s own daughter and her husband were among them.

forth his denunciations of divine wrath against the idolater and evil-doer. No threats, no dangers, daunted him ; and though death at the hands of his opponents seemed sooner or later inevitable, he never swerved from his purpose of declaring the message confided to him. Fortunately, the Meccans were not the only hearers of his message ; all the pilgrims who crowded to kiss the Black Stone came within the reach of his voice. Among them were wayfarers from Yatreb, or Medina, the city of “the people of the book,” the literary emporium (as we should say in America) of Arabia. Many Jews, many half Christians, dwelt there ; to the pagans of Medina, therefore, the unity of God was not, as to other pagans, a novelty and rock of offence ; and they listened to the voice of Mohammed, and believed, and became his disciples. Returning home to Yatreb, these few disciples became apostles, and while on all sides darkness seemed closing in upon the Reformer, while Mecca was becoming a more and more perilous home for him each year, silently at the sister city his doctrines were spreading ; and behold, in the twelfth year of the mission, when at the Holy City itself civil war and the death of the prophet seemed inevitable, twelve men went up from Medina to pledge themselves to Mohammed. At night, upon the hill Al Akaba, north of Mecca, these twelve swore to renounce all idolatry ; neither to steal, commit fornication, nor kill their infant children, — the common crimes of the pagan Arabs ; not to forge calumnies ; and to obey the new prophet of the one true God in every thing reasonable. Such was the oath of fealty on which rested the empire of the Caliphs. They returned, with one of the better instructed of the Meccan believers, who was to be a missionary in Yatreb. Even at that juncture, when death stood on one hand, and life and power on the other, Mohammed remained fronting death. Nay, when, the next year, a larger deputation from the city of the faithful came and offered to the endangered Meccan a home, and almost a throne, he still waited in his native town until all hope of success there should have vanished.

The thirteenth year of his mission came. The brave, wise, faithful friend of Abdallah’s son, Abu Taleb, had descended to the tomb, and the arm of power which shielded the prophet was withdrawn. Nor was the death of his defender his only loss ; Cadijah, — for twenty-five years his wife, to

whom through that quarter of a century he had been faithful as few of that land ever were, for many wives were allowed, — Cadijah, his benefactress and his first disciple, had also been recalled from the earth. It was the “year of mourning” for the Reformer, that one which thus took from him his two best friends. His heart was no longer in Mecca.

And now an enemy, a deadly enemy, filled the place of Abu Taleb, and the hour of vengeance drew near. Silently, beneath the shades of night, the leaders of the Koreish met in conclave ; with hushed voices, they plotted the destruction of Mohammed ; from each family one was to be chosen, and all these were to strike their daggers into the breast of the offending member of the house of Hashem, and thus would that powerful connection be forced to seek revenge upon all the other houses of the tribe. They plotted, but “God is the best layer of plots” ; * by unknown means those whispers reached the ear of the doomed one. Should he fly ? Had not God bidden him do so, by raising up an asylum at Yatreb ? But already his chamber was watched, and at midnight the daggers would be in his heart. “Give me thy mantle,” cried the young, fearless, generous Ali, “and do you, O Prophet, and Abubekir escape in the twilight.” Ali put on the green mantle of Mohammed, and laid himself, fearing nothing, upon the apostle’s bed. Eyes of vengeance watched him there, while the daggers were whetted, and while, with noiseless steps, the founder of Islam commenced the Hegira. He fled, with Abubekir, to a cave three miles from Mecca, and there rested till pursuit was passed. As he rested, sleeping calmly, his friend touched his arm ; he awoke to hear at the mouth of the cavern voices debating the probability of the fugitive being concealed there. Trembling with fear, Abubekir whispered, — “We are lost ! what can we do against so many, we two” ? “There is a third,” was the calm reply. “Who ?” asked the astonished follower, — and as his hand fell by chance in the dark on the apostle’s wrist, he felt the pulsations regular as those of a child ; — “Who ?” he asked. “God.” As they spoke, the voices receded, and they were safe. A pigeon had built her nest at the mouth of the cavern, and a spider had woven her web across the entrance. Truly, by a spider’s thread at

* Koran, ch. 8.

that moment hung the fate of the world. After three days' delay, the fugitives pursued their way, and reached Medina in safety. Five hundred men met the prophet, and he entered the city of his adoption in triumph.

How does this portion of his life, these thirteen years of persecution and contempt endured, and death dared hourly, correspond with the theory of imposture on speculation ? How does his answer in the cave agree with the probable feelings of one who was thinking, talking, living a lie ? If the lie theory can be made to explain the second period of Mohammed's life, then, we aver, a similar theory may be made to apply to almost every great promulgator of the gospel. If thirteen years so spent are not *primâ facie* proof of honesty, nothing can be ; and it is a proof so strong, that a vast, vast amount of counter evidence must be brought forward to overturn it. One who is content to reason as Professor Bush does, in his *Life of Mohammed*, may see no force in what is so mighty as evidence to us ; but to such champions of the cross we do not speak. He, for example, disbelieves the express statement of his hero, that he was not taught to write, — because, first, his cousin Ali was ; secondly, because writing was not rare among the Arabs ; thirdly, because Mohammed was to be a merchant ; and fourthly, because it is asserted in the Koran, the last place where truth is to be looked for ; * and he actually supposes this prince of liars to have dictated to Ali this useless lie, which Ali, and Cadijah, and every body else knew to be a lie, at the time when he wished to inspire confidence, and all for no other purpose, apparently, than to have the pleasure of lying. To such reasoners we have not a word to say ; but to the rest of our readers we address the question, — Does the second period of the prophet's life add to or take from the probability, created by the purity and honesty of his character during the first period, that he was honest ? And we cannot doubt the answer.

Let us now pass to the third, — the shortest, last, and most mysterious portion of this man's life. And let us begin by remembering that we are looking at a man fifty-three years old, one void of ambition hitherto, and remarkably free from impurity and immorality ; who has been led to feel keenly the

* Bush's *Life of Mohammed* (Harper's edition), pp. 38, 39.

need of a great radical change in the habits of his countrymen, who believes such a change must be effected by a revelation from God through an inspired prophet, and who has, after long meditation, come apparently to the conclusion that he is so inspired. And as we proceed in this man's history, and meet, as we shall, with circumstances which would stamp a sane man as a rogue, let our inquiry be, whether they are inconsistent with what has been observed of other monomaniacs, and honest religious enthusiasts. This is the basis on which, as we conceive, all such inquiries must proceed, and on which, in common daily affairs, all men would proceed. Had we known a man sensible and upright to the age of forty, and for the next thirteen years showing undoubted signs of insanity on some one subject, should we ever after that judge of his actions as of a perfectly sane man's in matters relating to that and kindred subjects? Should we not reckon as delusion in him many things which in one of sound mind we should deem clear knavery? Up to the time of the Hegira, we claim that Mohammed's life gives proof of nothing but honest self-deception or monomania; and we also claim, that, in trying to understand the ten years of his career that remain, we are still to regard him as under the same influence, unless something which is opposed to such an idea can be shown.

Mohammed had ever proclaimed the impolicy and iniquity of religious persecution; he had advocated the propagation of his doctrines, by addressing the reason, feelings, and consciences of men. For thirteen years he had persevered in thus addressing them, and almost in vain; they had spurned his instructions, rejected his truths, and sought his life. On a sudden, without agency of his, unsought, unasked by him, lo! God had put into his hands an army of devoted followers; for what? The old Hebrew collection answered very plainly, that God chastised by physical suffering those that persisted in rebellion and unbelief; it taught him that by the sword, when all else failed, Jehovah had prepared a way for himself. Is this denied? Is it denied that an Arabian of the sixth century might, in his best senses, most naturally thus read the Holy Book? Is it denied that in modern Europe, in England, more than a thousand years after Mohammed, the idea of promulgating by force the truth, even the truth as it is in Jesus, was a common idea? Can we

look at the conquest of America by the Spaniards, and hold an Arab, into whose possession Heaven had as by miracle given arms, an evident knave, and no enthusiast, for believing that God designed him to use the arms thus given for the purpose of spreading that truth which men would not otherwise receive ? Nothing, perhaps, tells more against Mohammed in the popular mind, than the idea that he wished to spread his faith by the sword ; and yet how strange would it have been, had he persevered in peaceful addresses to men's reason, after laboring so long in vain, and being at last empowered to use other means, — the same means that were used against him ! Truly, had he refused the armies of Yatreb, he would have deserved from all of us the name of prophet, and would have proved himself one of the truest successors to the spirit of the gentle Jesus. But so great virtue was not in him ; the offer of the sword was to his mind not to be refused, for God offered it. The means of conversion which the greatest monarch of Christendom tried some three centuries later, this untutored Arab appealed to. Was Charlemagne dishonest in his bloody baptisms ? If not, why Mohammed ? It will be said, because he once taught a better doctrine ; but shall there be no end to God's forbearance ? Had not a clear proof reached the fugitive from Mecca, that the day of retribution was at hand ?

But Mohammed, when in power, was cruel, vindictive, and showed that he used the sword for selfish, not noble, purposes ; so many appear to think. In two lives of the prophet lying before us, the fact, that, after the battle of Beder, the bodies of the Meccans were thrown by Mohammed's followers into a well, is mentioned as a striking instance of their barbarity. Did the writers of those works remember how Christians, in this nineteenth century, treat the corpses of their foes ? Did it occur to them, that, in the situation of the victorious army at Beder, no other mode of burial was possible than the one adopted ? and that the act which is denounced as barbarous may have been an act of unusual respect ? Surely, to leave the body of an enemy to the kites and dogs is as barbarous as to bury it, even though the grave be a well. And to aid them in estimating the barbarity of the victor in that wonderful battle, they had the fact, — more important, one would think, than the disposition of the dead, — that, of seventy prisoners taken, but two suffered death.

But the charge of cruelty is utterly false. Mohammed forgave the very men of Mecca who had driven him forth and hunted him like a wild beast ; he probably forgave the Jew-ess who administered the poison which produced his death ; nor does a spirit of cruelty show itself in any part of his career.

He entered Medina, as we have said, in triumph. He found himself Prophet, Priest, Lawgiver, Judge, General, and King. Never was monarch so revered by his people, as the son of Abdallah by his followers. He built a temple or mosque of the most primitive simplicity, and reared for himself a palm-tree for a pulpit. His private life was one of marked abstinence and plainness. He lit his fire, and swept his chamber ; mended his own garments, and spread his own table ; dates and barley-bread, milk and honey, were his food.

One charge, and only one, relative to his private conduct, is, or can be, made ; he is accused of licentiousness. Into a full discussion of this subject we cannot enter ; but we ask the inquirer to consider these suggestions. From his youth to the age of fifty-three, Mohammed had been a model of chastity, and this at a time when no external circumstances operated upon his mind to make him so. Is it, then, to be at once believed that he, who had been so free from licentiousness through youth and manhood, would become a profligate in his old age, when every inducement from without called upon him to control himself ? He was trying to reform his countrymen in regard to the very vice of which he is accused ; and should we look, in the course of nature, for utter abandonment on the part of the Reformer, heretofore so continent, just when he was preaching continence ? Ought we not, before we admit so improbable a charge, to weigh well the evidence on which it rests ? And what is this evidence ? It is, first, the tradition of his followers ; secondly, certain portions of the Koran. In regard to the first, we hold it as worthless, for it is clear that what we look on as criminal his followers viewed in a wholly different light ; * and this, leading, as we know it did, to immense exaggerations and fables, vitiates the tradition entirely. And what is the evidence of the Koran ? We take it to be this,

* See Gibbon, chap. 50, notes 162, &c.

and nothing more ; Mohammed took a greater number of wives than he allowed to his followers, under an assumed permission from God to do so. Why ? From a licentious spirit ? We cannot believe it. What then ? it may be asked. We answer, that the conduct of the prophet may, very probably, have been induced by the same feeling which led Napoleon to repudiate Josephine ; the only sons he had appear to have died in infancy, and he had no one to succeed him in that priesthood to which God had raised him. In short, that charge of unbounded licentiousness, which Christian and infidel writers have brought against the husband of Cadijah, we believe may be regarded as a misinterpretation of the fact, that, in his desire for an heir, he supposed himself allowed by Heaven to increase the number of his wives beyond the bounds prescribed to his followers. No other explanation than this seems to us to accord with his previous purity, and this explanation coincides entirely with the idea upon which we are proceeding, that Mohammed was a monomaniac, a self-deceived enthusiast, up to the time of his flight from Mecca.

And how do the other circumstances of his life at that time accord with our theory ? Take, for instance, the first noted event after his accession to power, that battle of Beder, to which we have already referred. A caravan of the Korish was on its way to Mecca. Anticipating an attack from the followers of Mohammed, a reinforcement from Mecca, consisting of nine hundred and fifty men, went out to meet and defend their fellow-citizens. To this force the Prophet could oppose only three hundred and thirteen soldiers ; but he did not hesitate about engaging the superior body, assuring his followers of divine aid. At first, he stood aloof from the battle, calling on God to assist his true worshippers ; but when he saw his men wavering before the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, throwing himself upon a horse, and casting a handful of sand into the air, with a loud cry he led his yielding followers back to the charge, and by his enthusiasm so inspirited his supporters, and daunted his opponents, that he gained the day.

In relation to this battle, we have another specimen of the way in which prejudice can lead a man to write. Professor Bush, after giving an account of the contest, says this triumph is often alluded to in the Koran “ in a style of *self-*

satisfied vaunting," and immediately quotes this passage : — "And ye slew not those who were slain at Beder yourselves, but God slew them. Neither didst thou, O Mohammed, cast the gravel into their eyes when thou didst seem to cast it, but God cast it" ; together with one or two others of similar import, all ascribing the victory to God.

But perhaps no period will more fully prove a man's honesty than the hour of death. How was it then with the Arabian impostor ? He knew, for many months before his death, that his end was approaching, as he died from the lingering disease produced by poison. As long as his strength permitted, he pursued his usual course, promulgating his faith by force, where the Koran was not enough. Though he knew Azrael to be so near, he changed neither in language nor action, but continued to claim to be God's messenger, and to fulfil the duties of his mission. At length his strength failed him, but not his courage, his enthusiasm, or his faith. For the last time he caused himself to be borne to the mosque, and spoke to his people. He told them that his last hour was near, and called upon any to whom he had been unjust, or whose name he had injured, to accuse him openly ; and if he owed any, he prayed them to make their claims then, rather than at the day of judgment. From the crowd there came a voice making a demand ; it was acknowledged and paid, with many thanks to the creditor. He then set free his slaves ; arranged every thing for his funeral ; appointed Abubekir to succeed him as priest, but made no mention of any successor in command ; and, with his head resting on Ayesha's knee, prepared to die. When the delirium of fever was upon him, he wished to dictate new messages from God ; when the delirium passed by, he bade his weeping friends be comforted. Around him were gathered his chief followers ; the worthlessness of power, the poverty of the rewards of ambition, could not fail to be seen by the dying man. Did he point out their vanity to Ali and Abubekir ? Were his last moments given to self-reproach, or even silent despair ? Could this impostor, this liar, this greatest of quacks and deceivers, pass away, and not utter one word showing that his soul was stricken with agony, when he looked back upon the villany of his mature years ? His lips moved ; they leant over him to catch the feeble sounds. "O God ! pardon my sins," he cried ; "yes, I

come among my fellow-laborers on high !” He dipped his faint hand in the water, sprinkled his face, and died. Was that a liar’s death-bed ?

But there is one fact in the history of Mohammed which is usually regarded as conclusive ; the fact, that he had revelations to suit his own plans, wishes, and position ; in any difficulty or danger, he was informed from heaven what course to pursue. This is considered as certain proof of his imposture. But we think the history of monomania would show it to be one of the most common results of that disease. An enthusiast whose mind is unsound will, in most cases, have his visions or voices, when circumstances make them desirable ; his revelations will be guided by his wishes. We cannot, therefore, think this strongest of all the evidences of the Arabian’s dishonesty of any weight.

We have now given the leading points which need to be considered, in estimating Mohammed’s honesty. For ourselves, we look upon him as honest to the last hour of his life ; and we suppose his success and his influence to have been the result of his truthfulness and his real greatness of soul. It is disheartening to think, for a moment, that a mere deceiver and cheat could rule men’s minds as this man did ; but it is full of comfort and food for faith, the conviction that earnest, heartfelt, fearless devotion to the cause of God, as he believed, enabled the Arab Reformer to change the fortunes of so many millions. We regard the lesson to be learned, from the study of the prophet’s life, as in favor of uprightness ; not, as by the imposture theory, in favor of deception and knavery.

But not only do we look on Mohammed as honest, we regard him as one of the great souls of the world. We have no room to discuss his whole character, but we would call the attention of the reader to his forgiveness of the Meccans who had sought his life ; to his ability as a soldier, though educated to arts of peace ; to the fact, that he originated the laws and literature of a great people, though but partially taught himself ; and to that peculiar power which he gained over all about him. Had he been less great, his honesty would not have enabled him to perform the wonders he did ; and had he been otherwise than honest, we cannot believe his name would have been now known to the reader of history.